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# MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
NATHANIEL COURTESY

A summary of significant events of  
interest to USDA management

Issue #108  
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PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS PILOT TEST.....A pilot test of the performance review process was conducted in July with the assistance of the Marketing and Transportation and the Office of the Secretary and Administration Performance Review Boards (PRB). The results of the test, while very favorable to the PRB process, did point up the need for a more systematic procedure. The following changes have been instituted for the rating period ending September 30, 1980:

- The rater will be required to furnish a one-page narrative documenting the achievements of the person being rated.
- The rater will also be required to furnish a one-page narrative documenting the position coefficient.
- The ratees will be required to furnish a one-page narrative dealing with both the rating and the position coefficient.
- The reviewer, if there is one, may submit a one-page statement on the position coefficient.
- Agencies will be required to submit a systematized form documenting the accomplishments.

For the rating period beginning October 1 there will be a requirement to set performance standards at three levels: minimally satisfactory (2) and two levels (3) and (4) of satisfactory. In addition, the performance elements and standards will be reviewed by each PRB during the first quarter of the rating period. To accommodate these changes, numerous revisions were made to the SES Users Handbook. These revisions and the appropriate forms have been distributed under cover of Personnel Bulletin 920-31. (Contact: Brad Foote, OP, ext. 76805)

AWARD OF RANK CEREMONIES.....Fourteen senior executives from the Department were recognized as Distinguished or Meritorious Executives in a ceremony on September 9. Those recognized were:

- Distinguished Executives

Howard W. Hjort, Director, Economics, Policy Analysis and Budget  
Douglas R. Leisz, Associate Chief, FS

- Meritorious Executives

J. Dawson Ahalt, Chairperson, WFAOSB  
Norman A. Berg, Chief, SCS  
Robert E. Buckman, Deputy Chief, Research, FS  
H.C. Cox, Regional Administrator, SEA  
Dean K. Crowther, Director, O&F  
Stephen B. Dewhurst, Director, OBPE  
Donald L. Houston, Administrator, FSQS  
William E. Kibler, Deputy Administrator for Statistics, ESCS  
Robert E. Magee, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, OIG  
Ralph J. McCracken, Associate Director, SEA  
Merlin A. Nelson, Associate Deputy Administrator,  
Meat and Poultry Inspection, FSQS  
Joan S. Wallace, Assistant Secretary for Administration

In addition to the Departmental ceremony, the two Distinguished Executives were honored by President Carter in a White House ceremony. (Contact: Brad Foote, OP, ext. 76905)

SEC RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY.....From the inception of SES on July 13, 1979, to the end of June 1980, there have been 63 reassignments within the Department and 8 transfers to other Departments. In this period, there have been 41 career selections through merit competition, 10 noncareer selections and one reinstatement. In addition, 17 details, one temporary promotion and three limited emergency appointments have been processed. In total, 150 SES related personnel actions have been processed during the period. (Contact: Earl Hadlock, OP, ext. 72830)

RIDESHARING-EMPLOYEE TRANSPORTATION CENTER.....Over 400 applications for ridesharing services have been received since the Employee Transportation Center opened on June 1 in Room 1566-S. Since that date, at least three new carpools/vanpools have been formed. Upon completion of the Department's annual parking reassignment within the next month, approximately 1,000 permit applications will be keypunched into the new rideshare system. The Department will then have a fully automated system capable of matching all new applications for carpool/vanpool services with an inventory of all currently active carpools/vanpools serving the USDA DC complex. (Contact: Mary Grubb, O&F, ext. 75225)

LEASED VEHICLE PILOT PROGRAM.....A leased vehicle pilot program has been developed and implemented in a joint effort between AMS and O&F. This program will effectively reduce costs associated with high mileage drivers (12,000 miles per year and over) now being paid 20 cents per mile for use of their privately owned vehicles (POV).

As of July 23, a total of 550 leased vehicles have been ordered. The potential cost savings are estimated at \$237,000 and the cost avoidance through use of more efficient vehicles should be \$275,000. The estimate of 220,000 gallons of fuel saved is based on the actual miles driven last year by POV's averaging 16 mpg and the leased vehicles averaging 27 mpg. The gasoline cost was calculated at \$1.25 per gallon. FmHA, FSQS and FCIC are participating in the pilot program.

O&F plans to negotiate a new contract that will include all interested USDA agencies. (Contact: Harold Franklin, O&F, ext. 73141)

MANAGEMENT CONTROL OF CONSULTING SERVICE CONTRACTS AND IMPROVEMENT OF AGENCY PROCUREMENT PRACTICES.....

- OMB has given approval of the Department's management control system and copies of this system have been sent to USDA agencies and staff offices for comment. Copies have also been sent to Assistant Secretaries for Administration in 16 Departments and Agencies with requests for comment. - OIG has audited consulting service contracts in several agencies as a result of the OMB initiative and has prepared a draft audit report.
  - A governmentwide audit guide has been prepared by representatives from 12 Offices of Inspector General. Departmental Administration reviewed and commented on this guide.
- (Contact: Terry Hall, MS, ext. 76010)



USDA BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM.....The results of the latest blood donor drives in the Department have been very disappointing and the Secretary, the Office of Personnel Management and the Red Cross are concerned.

The next visit of the Red Cross Mobile will be November 4-7. This will give us another opportunity to show what we, as individuals, and as a Department can do to support this important effort. Please make a note on your calendar and set aside a few minutes on November 4, 5, 6 or 7 to help. Let's see what you and your own office can do. Issue a challenge and give blood. (Contact: Tony Musolino, OSHM, ext. 78247)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN SURVEY IN SCS.....The SCS Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights Staff has sent questionnaires to 300 female employees nationwide to determine their attitudes toward job mobility, career development opportunities, pay, and career counseling available in SCS. The results of the survey are now being compiled and a summary report should be available in 2-3 months. This report is intended to be a guide to be used to reduce the high rate of turnover of SCS women employees. (Contact: David Montoya, SCS, ext. 72059)

SEX DISCRIMINATION MEETING.....Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in Federal education programs and activities. At present, thirty-two USDA programs are covered by this policy. Representatives from the Departments of Justice and Education will meet with USDA agency civil rights coordinators and staff of the Office of Equal Opportunity on October 6 to discuss USDA responsibilities and plans for Title IX enforcement. (Contact: James Hood, OEO, ext. 77327)

GENDER-SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY IN USDA REGULATIONS.....In an Unnumbered Secretary's Memorandum entitled "Sex Discrimination" dated October 27, 1977, the Secretary directed agencies to review policies and program regulations to eliminate sex discrimination. One aspect of this effort that requires continuing oversight by management officials is the review for gender-specific terminology of public information materials and program regulations published in the Federal Register. The Department has generally been successful in this effort but some oversights have occurred. Equal opportunity and administrative review staffs are reminded to adhere to these regulations. (Contact: William Payne, OEO, ext. 77327)

HISPANIC PLACEMENT PROGRAM.....The Hispanic Placement Program is a combined effort of the Department of Labor and the Office of Personnel Management to meet the continuing demand for typists and clerks in the Washington area. This Program uses Comprehensive Employment Training Act funds to train and relocate Hispanic persons into this area and assist Federal agencies in diversifying the workforce. USDA has committed 55 permanent full-time positions to the program and, to date, seven positions have been filled. The remaining positions should be filled within two months. (Contact: Pat Killen, OP, ext. 72435 or Vangie Elizondo, OEO, 755-1160)

HISPANIC HERITAGE WEEK.....September 14-20 was Hispanic Heritage Week and, for the first time, agencies of the Department hosted events under the overall coordinating effort of the Department's Hispanic Employment Program. ESCS and FSQS were the first two agencies to host a program. At a meeting to be scheduled in October, agency Hispanic Employment Program Managers will be able to bid on hosting an event in September 1981. (Contact: Vangie Elizondo, OEO, 755-1160)

SAN ANTONIO OUTREACH SEMINAR.....The Department's next Outreach Seminar will be held in San Antonio, Texas, on October 9-10. These seminars are designed to provide information on USDA programs and services to minorities and women and comply with the Secretary's goal of ensuring program delivery to all segments of the population. (Contact: Vangie Elizondo, OEO, 755-1160)

PROCUREMENT PREFERENCE PROGRAM.....The third quarter FY 1980 procurement preference program data are in and the Department has a long way to go to meet the goals. In minority business, we have reached 33% of the \$60 million goal. In the small business area, we have reach 61% of that 58% level for total awards in excess of \$10,000 for small business. In the labor surplus area, we have reached 47% of the \$77.5 million goals. Increased effort from procurement personnel is required. (Contact: Paul McCloskey, OSDBU, ext. 77921)

OSDBU DIRECTORS GROUP.....Pres Davis was elected Chairman of the OSDBU Directors Group at their September luncheon. This organization which was established to provide a coordinated effort to maximize assistance to small and disadvantaged businesses includes representatives from 20 Federal Departments and Agencies. All OSDBU Directors in the Federal government have been invited to the October 15 luncheon at the Veterans Administration. (Contact: Cathy Cronin, OSDBU, ext. 77922)

USDA CHILD CARE CENTER..... In conjunction with the Department's commitment to the International Year of the Child Program in 1979, a task force was established to explore the feasibility of an on-site child care center in the USDA Washington, D.C. complex. For the past year this task force has researched child care centers and negotiated with GSA for space and now estimates a cost of \$75,000 for renovation of space in the Auditors Building, purchase of equipment, initial personnel costs, etc. The benefits of a child care center in the D.C. complex are wide ranging for both employees and the Department.

Following an opinion from OGC that the use of appropriated funds for a child care center is authorized, the Assistant Secretary for Administration sent a memorandum to each agency and staff office asking for a commitment to support the center with the initial start-up funds. This \$75,000 amount was distributed based on the number of permanent full-time employees in the D.C. complex. All responses to date have been favorable with only a few agencies not yet heard from.

GSA has indicated that the renovation could start in November with a scheduled opening date for the Center in January or February of 1981. However, this cannot be done until all commitments are received. (Contact: Edwardene Rees, MS, ext. 76983)

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES.....Do you have items of interest to management officials of the Department? Is your agency or staff office doing new and/or exciting things in management improvement, energy conservation, training, health and safety, EEO, performance appraisal, etc? Why not share these ideas with others. Please submit your articles, approved at the appropriate level, to Neil I. Van Vliet, Management Staff, room 147-E. The deadline for the next issue is October 15.